

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3546

INFO USLO PEKING

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CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJECT: NPC PERSONALITIES AND CHANGES TO STATE COUNCIL LINE-UP

REF: HONG KONG 0675

SUMMARY. NEW STATE COUNCIL FOCUSING ON CONSENSUS OF VETERAN LEADERS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (NPC) WAS NOTABLE FOR THE LARGE NUMBER OF REHABILITATED VETERAN CADRES WHO WERE GIVEN ELDER STATESMAN STATUS IN THE NPC'S PRESIDUM AND AMONG STANDING COMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMEN. THE NUMBER OF STATE COUNCIL VICE PREMIERS IS EXPANDED TO 12, CLOSER TO ITS PRE-CULTURAL REVOLUTION LEVEL. MILITARY REPRESENTATION AMONG THE VICE PREMIERS DROPS TO ONE--CHEN HSI-LIEN--COMPARED WITH AS MANY AS SIX IN EARLY STATE COUNCILS. ONE OF THE VICE PREMIERS, SUN CHIEN, IS UNKNOWN TO US, SAVE AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. IN SHARP CONTRAST WITH THE PAST, ONLY THREE OF THE NEW VICE

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PREMIERS HOLD MINISTERIAL POST, AND THIS MAY INDICATE THAT THE

VICE PREMIERS WILL FUNCTION AS A COLLEGIUM ON ALL MAJOR DECISIONS.

2. THERE ARE 17 NEW MINISTERS AMONG THE 29 PORTFOLIOS, BUT THE NUMBER OF MINISTRIES AND COMMISSIONS HAS DECREASED FROM THE PRE-CULTURAL REVOLUTION TOTALS OF 40 AND NINE RESPECTIVELY TO THE CURRENT TOTAL OF 26 MINISTRIES AND THREE COMMISSIONS. THERE ARE STILL EIGHT ACTIVE OR FORMER PLA MEN IN MINISTER POSITIONS.

3. CONTRASTING WITH THE DECLINE IN THE OVERALL NUMBER OF MINISTRIES, THE FOURTH NPC ALSO SPLIT UP SOME MINISTRIES WHICH HAD BEEN COMBINED FOLLOWING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION. THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS ARE RESTORED TO THEIR PRE-1970 SEPARATE STATUS, AND THE MINISTRY OF COAL IS BROKEN OFF FROM MINISTRIES OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES. BOTH COAL AND RAILWAY INDUSTRIES WERE IN A SERIOUS SLUMP LAST YEAR AS MENTIONED IN CENTRAL DOCUMENT 21 (1974 HONG KONG 8435; 1974 HONG KONG 12031). PRESUMABLY THEY WILL NOW RECEIVE MORE FULL-TIME DIRECTION AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS.

4. THE CULTURAL GROUP UNDER THE STATE COUNCIL HAS APPARENTLY BEEN ABSORBED INTO THE RESTORED MINISTRY OF CULTURE, WHICH IS HEADED BY A FORMER DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE CULTURAL GROUP. YU HUI-YUNG (1974 HONG KONG 5940). THE FORMER HEAD OF THE CULTURAL GROUP, PEKING CHIEF AND POLITBURO MEMBER WU TEH, WAS AN IMPLIED TARGET OF CRITICISM LAST YEAR, BUT HE HAS SURVIVED WELL AND HE SERVED AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE NPC. SIMILARLY, THE STATE COUNCIL'S SCIENCE AND EDUCATION GROUP, WHOSE FORMER CHAIRMAN IS NOW THE MINISTER OF SECOND MACHINE BUILDING, HAS PRESUMABLY BEEN SWALLOWED UP IN THE REACTIVATED MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. MACHINE BUILDING MINISTRIES TWO THROUGH SEVEN ARE RESTORED; THERE HAD LONG BEEN INDICATIONS THAT AT LEAST SOME OF THEM CONTINUED TO EXIST IN SPITE OF THE REGIME'S SILENCE ABOUT THEM (1974 HONG KONG A-269).

5. AMONG THE PERSONALITIES PRESENT AT THE CONGRESS, PROVINCIAL FIRST SECRETARIES WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HEILUNGKIANG'S OFTCRITICIZED WANG CHIA-TAO AND SHANSI'S TROUBLED HSIEH CHIEN-HUA WERE ALL IDENTIFIED IN THE NPC'S PRESIDUM. PROVINCES WITHOUT FIRST SECRETARIES WERE REPRESENTED BY OTHER RANKING MEMBERS. MILITARY REGION COMMANDERS WERE ALL PRESENT ON THE PRESIDUM, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INCLUDING THE TROUBLED LANCHOW COMMANDER HAN HSIEN-CHU, AS WERE THEIR RANKING POLITICAL COMMISSARS WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF POLITBURO MEMBER AND PEKING MR FIRST POLITICAL COMMISSAR CHI TENG-KUEI. HE WAS GIVEN A VICE PREMIER SLOT BUT APPEARS NOT TO HAVE BEEN PRESENT ON THE ROSTRUM.

6. FORMER FUKIEN CHIEF YEH FEI, NOW MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, IS THE ONLY TOP REHABILITEE FROM THE 1973 TENTH PARTY CONGRESS

TO GET A MINISTERIAL POST. OTHERS IN THAT LONG JOBLESS GROUP--
ULANFU, TAN CHEN-LIN, AND LI CHING-CHUAN--WERE MADE VICE CHAIR-
MEN OF THE NPC. ALL OF THESE TOP REHABILITEES HAVE NOW BEEN
GIVEN EITHER PARTY OR STATE RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THE EXCEPTION
OF THE FORMER CHEKIANG FIRST SECRETARY CHIANG HUA WHO WAS NOT
REPORTED IN ATTENDANCE AT THE NPC, FUELING SPECULATION THAT HE
MAY BE IN THE PROVINCES FOR AN ASSIGNMENT. THERE APPEARS TO HAVE
BEEN ONLY ONE NEW REHABILITEE WHO APPEARED AT THE NPC; TAN YU-
PAO, AN OLD GUERILLA FIGHTER AND FORMER SECRETARY OF HUNAN,
APPEARED IN THE PRESIDUM LIST FOR HIS FIRST REPORTED APPEARANCE
SINCE 1966.

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